



# TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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## **EAST HAMPTON TOWN'S LIFEGUARDS PRIORITIZE BEACH SAFETY AND TRAINING; URGE SWIMMERS TO USE PROTECTED BEACHES ONLY, AND TO EXERCISE CAUTION**

*Follow Lifeguard directives to safely share the waters with marine life*

As beach season heats up, East Hampton Town officials and lifeguards remind swimmers to enter the water only where lifeguards are on duty, and to remain aware of their surroundings.

Dangerous rip currents at ocean beaches can pull swimmers offshore. Marine life, such as sharks, in our waters can also be hazardous. Learn about how to identify rip currents, and to swim parallel to shore until out of the current: <http://eamptonny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1057/Rip-Current-PDF?bidId=>  
Avoid swimming near "bait balls," or groups of fish and other sea life that is prey to larger animals.

East Hampton Town lifeguards are certified and participate in ongoing training to be fully prepared for emergency situations. Along with lifeguards from other agencies across Long Island, a number of East Hampton lifeguards have recently completed a NYS-approved "Personal Watercraft Rescues Operators Certification Course," and are now making use of personal watercraft (such as Jet Skis) as rescue vessels and to monitor the waters for potentially dangerous marine life.

Under the direction of Chief Lifeguard John Ryan and in response to increased public concern about dangerous marine life near the shore, the town's lifeguard corps has implemented a protocol to monitor ocean swim areas. In addition to using personal watercraft, the guards regularly use drones for aerial surveys. As needed, Jet Ski operators are deployed to break up schools of fish that have been known to attract sharks. Sharks are naturally occurring in our area and may follow their prey even into near-shore waters.

East Hampton Town lifeguards are also part of a network of agencies that have immediate contact with one other to report sightings of sharks or other issues of concern, which includes the Village of East Hampton, Suffolk County, New York State, and additional local municipalities and agencies as far as the Town of Southampton and beyond.

East Hampton Town Chief Lifeguard John Ryan Jr. stated; "This action plan, precautions and regular training by the town's lifeguards help to make sure that our designated swimming areas are as safe as possible for the town's residents and visitors alike."

If you notice a potential sea life threat, please contact the nearest East Hampton Town Lifeguard staff member or contact the East Hampton Town Police Department at 631-537-7575.

